

STUDY REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CROWNINSHIELD LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Brookline, Massachusetts



Report Preparation

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Summary Sheet

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Date of Public Hearing: TBA April, 2015

Estimated Date of Town Meeting: May 26, 2015

Total Number of Buildings in Proposed District: 95

Total Number of Properties in Proposed District:

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INTRODUCTION

Brookline's diverse historic architecture is predominantly residential, representing different periods and the influx of differing socio-economic groups of the 19th and early 20th centuries. With the exception of the Cottage Farm neighborhood adjacent to the Back Bay tidal flats (now Kenmore Square), the northern area of town remained suburban estates and farms and escaped significant redevelopment until the 1890s. At that time, large tracts of land in an area bounded by Pleasant Street on the east, Beacon Street on the south and Commonwealth Avenue on the north, were transformed into streets of single-family homes and apartment blocks. Much of this new construction occurred during a short period of time between 1895 and 1920. The study area for the proposed Crowninshield Local Historic District, which in particular stands out for its coherence and architecturally significant single-family homes, consists of a distinctive concentration of houses built between the years 1901-1927.

The establishment of a local historic district has been recognized as the most effective method to preserve the architectural character of a neighborhood. In 1960, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enacted historic district enabling legislation (MSG 40C). Since then, hundreds of communities across the Commonwealth have created local historic districts. Brookline created its first historic district in the Cottage Farm neighborhood in 1979. Since then, it has established the Chestnut Hill (2005), Graffam-McKay (2004), Harvard Avenue (2005), Lawrence (2011), Pill Hill (1983) and Wild-Sargent (2012) Local Historic Districts.

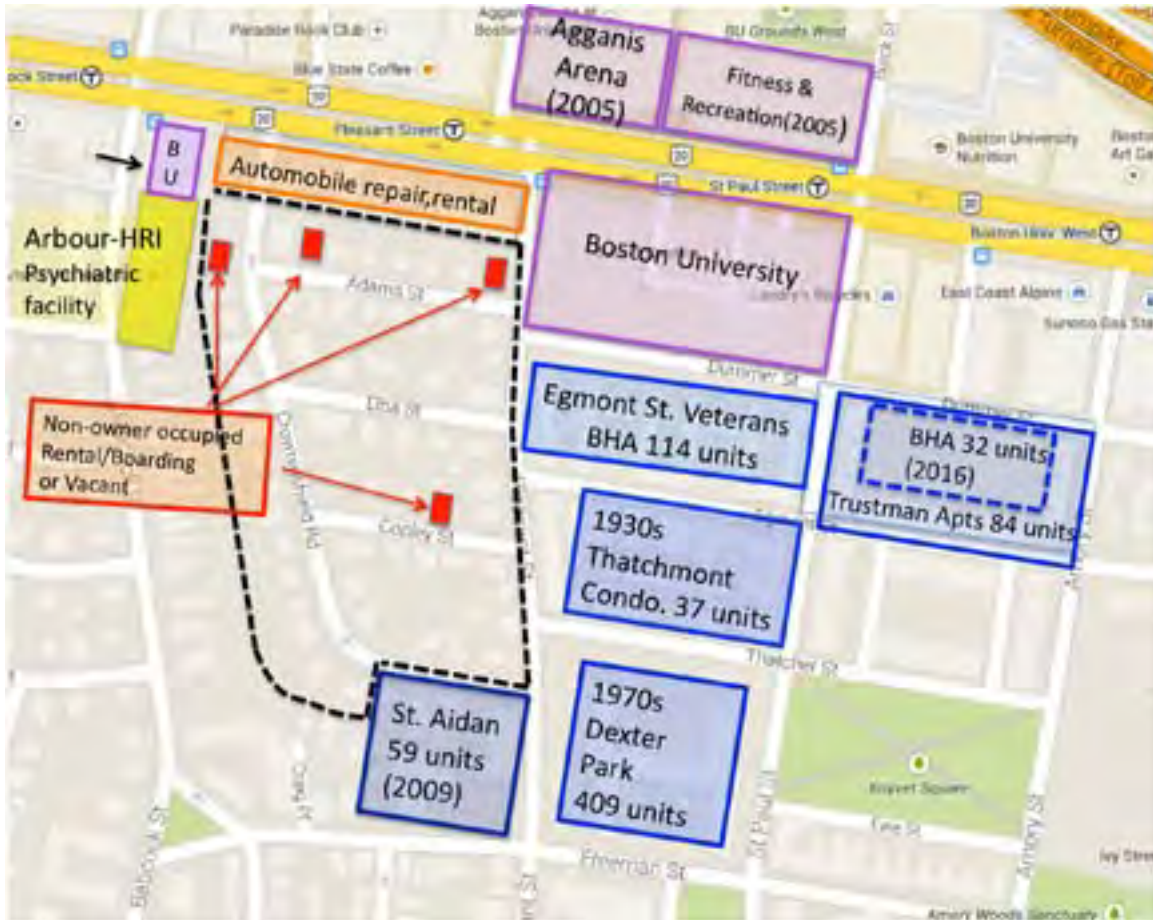
This draft study report has been prepared in collaboration with the Brookline Preservation Commission, which is acting as the Historic District Study Committee, in order to consider forwarding the report to the Massachusetts Historical Commission in accordance with Chapter 40C.

METHODOLOGY

Preservation Need

The Crowninshield Neighborhood area is a small, cohesive neighborhood consisting of 95 properties (houses and garages), primarily single-family homes. The residents have long recognized the neighborhood's vulnerability. It borders on commercial and retail properties, large apartment buildings, and a major 40B development. Boston University (BU) owns much of the property in the surrounding area including many buildings on the south side of Commonwealth Avenue. In addition, BU has begun aggressive development on the north side. The commercial establishments on both sides of this major street cater to students—Paradise Rock Club, T's Pub, Sunset Cantina—and to automobile repair and rental.

Set forth below is a map showing the neighborhood in the context of the buildings adjacent to its borders.



- On its north side, the Crowninshield neighborhood directly abuts a strip of automobile repair shops and a car rental agency that front along Commonwealth Avenue.
- To the northeast and on the north side of Commonwealth Avenue is the Agganis Arena, constructed in 2005 and frequently the site of large-scale public events.
- To the east, multi-unit housing was constructed along Egmont and Thatcher streets beginning in the 1930s; an example is the housing currently termed the Thatchmont Condominium of 37 units between these two streets. This high-density housing was further increased with the construction of multi-unit housing under the aegis of the Brookline Housing Authority, including the Trustman Apartments (84 units), which are currently being further expanded along Dummer Street with the construction of 32 additional units. Abutting Pleasant Street and thus directly across from the Crowninshield neighborhood are the Egmont Street Veterans apartments (114 units), also under the aegis of the Brookline Housing Authority, which was constructed in the late 1940s.
- To the southeast and abutting Pleasant Street is the Dexter Park apartment complex, which was built in the mid-1970s on the site of the former Dexter School. Those managing this building of 409 units state that it is the largest apartment building in Brookline.

- On its south side, the Crowninshield neighborhood directly fronts the recently constructed (2009) St. Aidan multi-story and multi-unit (59 units) development.
- Finally, on its west side, the Crowninshield neighborhood abuts the multi-story Arbour-HRI psychiatric facility and the multi-story former Department of Public Safety building that was taken over in 2001 by Boston University.

The map reveals a neighborhood that is surrounded on almost all sides by real estate developments that threaten its character as a neighborhood of owner-occupied, single-family dwellings. In addition, the proximity of the neighborhood to BU makes the area appealing to investors renting rooms to students. For example, one half of the 2 family house located on 3 Adams Street is non-owner occupied and is rented to students. Non-occupant investors own three other dwellings in the neighborhood.

In the longer term, BU represents an ever-present concern for the Crowninshield neighborhood. BU has indicated in its long-term planning documents that it does not intend to acquire and develop property to the south of Commonwealth Avenue. Meanwhile BU has constructed high-rise dormitory buildings on its west campus that loom over much of the area, including the Crowninshield neighborhood. The construction of such high-rise dormitories is planned to continue into the future. In fact, however, BU is already present on a *de facto* basis to the east of the Crowninshield Neighborhood, since many BU students (as well as students from other area schools) rent apartments in Dexter Park.

Along the western edge of the Crowninshield neighborhood lies the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District, established in 2004 to protect another fragile historic area from the demolition of historic homes and the encroachment of development. The Cottage Farm LHD to the east is within close proximity as well.

The neighborhood has been forced to address the pressures on its borders since the early 1930s, when the neighborhood was fully developed. Long before the expansion of the current abutting institutions and the commercialization of Commonwealth Avenue, the presence of Braves Field (the current BU Nickerson Field) led to a no parking ban on its streets that has continued to this day, affording an important measure of protection. In the 1970s, the neighborhood was rezoned to S7 (single family), and restrictions to use and height were placed on the commercial properties on the south side of Commonwealth Avenue.

In addition, after a car struck a child, Crowninshield Road became one way towards Commonwealth Avenue. This reduced traffic by preventing cars and trucks traveling east on Commonwealth Avenue from using Crowninshield Road, Adams Street, Elba Street, and Copley Street to bypass traffic at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Pleasant Street. All of these measures were necessary to protect a fragile residential area from the pressures of traffic, parking, and large-scale development. These pressures continue to this day.

More recently, the Town and neighborhood engaged constructively with the developers of the St. Aidan's mixed-income, 40B project and as a result, were able to save both the historic church and the massive copper beech tree, reduce the density and massing of the project, and secure a pedestrian walkway connecting Freeman Street and Crowninshield Road.

Neighborhood Interest

Miss Anna McCarthy, an elderly woman who lived at 21 Crowninshield Road, was the last member of the McCarthy family to live in the house, which her family purchased in 1926. Other family members also lived in the neighborhood for many years. She died in the summer of 2014. The house, a beautiful Arts and Crafts stucco dwelling built in 1910, was sold to a new owner (who also owns the land for the adjacent Enterprise car rental agency and all of the car repair shops on the south side of Commonwealth Avenue between Pleasant Street and Crowninshield). In December, several dozen trees on the property were cut down, eliminating the buffer between the neighborhood and Commonwealth Avenue and the Arbour-HRI psychiatric facility. As this news spread, residents gathered to talk about how to protect the fragile neighborhood, its architecture, its history and its beauty.

Neighbors consulted with members of the Preservation Commission and the Housing Advisory Board. A small group of residents met on November 30, 2014 to discuss how best to save the house at 21 Crowninshield. A neighborhood-wide meeting was held at a neighbor's house on December 3, 2014, which was attended by more than 35 residents. In the following days, a flyer was hand-delivered to each property, notifying residents and owners that the Preservation Commission would review the new owner's demolition permit on December 9, 2014. More than 70 neighbors attended this meeting to oppose the demolition (one of the largest groups ever to appear to oppose a demolition), and a one-year demolition delay was imposed.

The neighborhood created an informal Steering Committee, which met several times in December and January. After a December 14, 2014 meeting, the Steering Committee recommended that the neighborhood create a Local Historic District to preserve and protect the unique character of this enclave. Steering Committee members and neighbors went door-to-door distributing information and answering questions about Local Historic Districts. After sending or delivering letters to all homeowners of record, as well as residents of adjacent neighborhoods, a well-attended informational neighborhood sponsored meeting was held at the Brookline Public Library on January 5, 2015 to discuss the issue. The chairman of the Preservation Commission attended the meeting, as did one of its staff members, to answer questions about the implications of forming a Local Historic District.

By mid-January 2015, owners of 53 of the 61 dwellings (63 units) in the neighborhood (84%) had signed a petition in support of forming a Local Historic District. At a public meeting on January 22, 2015, the Commission voted unanimously to initiate the investigation of this area as a Local Historic District and to undertake a study report for this area. At its February 10, 2015 public meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to accept the Draft Study Report, to forward it to MHC and the Brookline Planning Board and to submit a Warrant article for the May 2015 Town Meeting to establish the Crowninshield Local Historic District.

Report Documentation

The basic research for this study report derives from documentation and building inventory forms prepared over the years for the Brookline Preservation Commission. Additional

documentation was provided through various primary source research conducted by the Preservation Commission staff over the years. These sources include local and regional newspapers, such as the Brookline Chronicle, the New England Master Builder, Banker and Tradesman and the Boston Globe. Extensive use was made of Brookline's building permits. Also examined were deed records, town atlases, tax lists and directories. A number of neighbors have found original plans and elevations. Other documents used include the recently commissioned area study of the Survey & Planning Grant, which recommends listing the Crowninshield neighborhood in the National Register of Historic Places and the Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth. A bibliography is included in the Appendix of this report.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed Crowninshield Local Historic District (CLHD) comprises a cohesive group of 61 residential structures, consisting of 63 residences, and 34 outbuildings abutting the Boston/Brookline Commonwealth Avenue boundary. Defined by the western side of Pleasant Street to the east, both sides of Crowninshield Street to the south and west, and both sides of Adams Street to the north, the proposed CLHD is an excellent example of effective early-20th century suburban planning and design. Most the structures within the proposed CLHD were constructed between 1900 and 1927. Many of the early homeowners were managers, professionals and business owners. However, by the early 1930s, the neighborhood was composed primarily of middle- and upper middle-class Irish Catholic and Jewish American families of similar economic and professional backgrounds. The physical plan, distinctive architecture, landscaping and well-defined perimeters of the neighborhood has engendered local pride and has united neighborhood residents in their efforts to preserve and perfect the cohesiveness of the community.

The land comprising the proposed Crowninshield Local Historic District has been a part of the Town of Brookline since its establishment in 1705. During most of the 18th century, the land was owned by descendants of Judge Samuel Sewall, who participated in the infamous Salem Witch Trials. The Sewalls were active in Brookline town government during the 18th century. In the early 1800s, the property was purchased by Uriah Cotting, a Boston merchant. For the first 125 years, Brookline was a farming community, and little distinguished the village from its rural neighbors until the early 19th century. This changed in 1821 when the privately financed construction of a tidal mill dam across the width of Boston's future Back Bay neighborhood established a direct physical connection between Boston and the independent communities of Brookline, Allston and Brighton. Economic and residential growth along the length of the mill dam soon followed, and growth was accelerated by the arrival of the Brookline branch of the Boston and Worcester Railroad in 1848, and the extension of Beacon Street into Brookline in 1850. The creation and development of middle class residential neighborhoods accelerated and intensified in 1889 and 1896 as streetcar lines were constructed along Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue.

One of the original investors in the private construction of the Boston and Roxbury Mill Dam Corporation was David Sears II, a prominent Brookline businessman, landowner and

philanthropist. Following completion of the mill dam, Sears began acquiring farmland in the northern area of Brookline, including the Crowninshield parcel, which he purchased from Uriah Cotting. By 1849, Sears owned more than 200 acres of land between the Muddy River and Commonwealth Avenue. Sears subsequently distributed his Brookline property holdings amongst his six children, including his daughter, Harriet Sears, and her husband George Caspar Crowninshield. Harriet had married well; the Crowninshields were wealthy Boston area Brahmins who were influential in seafaring, trading, politics and literature. The couple was given the 16 acres of land formerly owned by Cotting and constructed a suburban Mansard residence around 1850. Period atlases show the mansion located approximately at the center of the estate (near present-day 50 Crowninshield Road), facing north, and accessed by a semicircular drive that extended west from present-day Pleasant Street. The residence boasted a hot house and several other outbuildings and had a small pond located south of what is now the Commonwealth Avenue/Packard's Corner curve. The boundaries of the original Sears/Crowninshield estate are virtually identical to the borders of the proposed Crowninshield Local Historic District.



The Harriet Sears/George Crowninshield mansion survived for 49 years. In 1899, the heirs to the property demolished the original house and subdivided the estate for residential development. Prominent among the Crowninshield heirs who developed the family estate was Francis (Fanny) Cadwalader Crowninshield Adams, daughter of Harriet and George Crowninshield, her husband, John Quincy Adams II (great grandson of President John Adams), and their son, Charles Francis Adams II. Charles F. Adams and Charles E. Cotting (whose ancestor, Uriah Cotting, had originally sold the greater Brookline property to Charles's great-grandfather, David Sears, nearly 70 years earlier) served as trustees for the land from 1900 to 1926, overseeing the sale of the neighborhood plats.

By 1890, Brookline was established as an independent, affluent and desirable suburb within easy commuting distance of downtown Boston. The subdivided Crowninshield estate was distinct among the North Brookline neighborhoods developed during this period, with virtually every residence being a detached, single-family structure designed for middle- and upper middle-class families. Forty-six of the structures were designed by respected Boston architects, several of national prominence for individual owners over a decade. This was in marked contrast to the more modest neighborhoods lying to the immediate east and south of the proposed Crowninshield Local Historic District, which were primarily constructed by builders and consisted of attached three-story brick row housing and two-story wood frame duplex housing.

The Crowninshield estate was originally subdivided into 72 lots. An alleyway separated the ten lots on Adams Street from the commercial area on Boston's Commonwealth Avenue. This alleyway continues to serve as an easement that allows residents of Adams Street to access driveways that open onto the alley. Four new streets were laid out: Crowninshield Road, which followed the south and west borders of the original estate, and three east/west streets that connected Pleasant Street and Crowninshield Road. The street names selected for the Crowninshield development reflected the family names associated with the Crowninshield family and historical associations. In addition to the eponymous Crowninshield Road, Adams Street was named after the presidential in-laws of Fanny Crowninshield Adams. Elba Street appears to have been named after the island of Elba and reflect David Sears' admiration for Napoleon Bonaparte. (Sears had named his nearby Brookline estate "Longwood" after Napoleon's exiled home on Elba.) Copley Street is thought to be named for the 18th century artist John Singleton Copley, whose descendant Elizabeth Clark Copley Greene was married to Caspar Crowninshield, the son of George and Harriet Crowninshield, and Fanny Crowninshield Adams' brother.

The average lot size in the neighborhood was 6,700 square feet. Land plats averaged a little over 6,000 square feet along the west side of Crowninshield Road and the north sides of Adams and Elba Streets; plats located along the east side of Crowninshield Road and the south side of Copley Street averaged between 7,000 and 8,000 square feet. Three corner lots were sized at 11,000 square feet and over. The smallest three lots were 5,200 square feet and located adjacent to each other along the south side of Adams Street. At an unknown time, one of the largest plats of land located at the north corner of Adams and Pleasant Street was subdivided into two separate parcels.

The Crowninshield streets, except Pleasant Street, were laid out and designed with a continuous grass verge separating the street curb from concrete sidewalks. The verge allowed planting of small- to medium-sized trees along both sides of all streets. The trees have now achieved mature growth and provide a pleasing and harmonious appearance defining the neighborhood. The cohesive character of the neighborhood was further enhanced by common building setbacks, similar building massing, scale and a harmonious use of building materials.

More than half the homes in the Crowninshield neighborhood were designed with garages to accommodate the automobile. The "auto house" garage was of simple form, detached from the main house and designed and often clad with materials to complement the main residence. The garage was traditionally sited at the corner of the lot at the end of a side driveway. The driveways were surfaced with poured concrete. Notable exceptions include brick, flagstone and paving blocks.

Unlike the rapid construction of speculative homes overseen by two men in the adjacent Graffam-McKay Local Historic District, the lots in the Crowninshield neighborhood were sold slowly to individual buyers; several property owners purchased multiple lots and built between two and four houses, occupying one home and renting the rest. Some homeowners on Adams Street built houses for themselves and then for their families (12 Adams Street through 24 Adams). In several instances, houses appear to have been constructed on speculation and rented

out before being sold to permanent owners. It was not uncommon for these permanent owners to be related to other families in the neighborhood.

The vast majority of buildings in the Crowninshield neighborhood are designed in various interpretations of the Shingle Style, American Arts and Crafts, Craftsman, Colonial Revival and Georgian and Federal Revival styles. The neighborhood is unusual in that nearly all of the houses in the neighborhood were architect-designed, with 33 designers identified. Several architects were highly regarded in the Boston metropolitan area and many seem to have been middle-tier designers who produced homes of high quality in a variety of styles. The homes constructed before 1913 are primarily two-and-a-half story structures of similar massing and topped by a hip or gabled roof with multiple dormers. There are a small number of gambrel shaped roofs as well. Foundations are constructed of stone, brick, or poured concrete, often finished with pebbled stucco. The houses are of wood-frame construction and clad with stucco, brick veneer or wood clapboards. Many of the houses retain their original slate or Spanish clay tile roofs. Characteristic design details include a highly articulated front entry portico and/or porch, decorative eaves, exposed rafter tails, and projecting bay windows. Most of the homes retain their original wood window sashes, often of a small paned 6/6 and/or 6/1 design.

The first structures built in the new neighborhood were located on large land plats or street corners. The first house constructed in the new Crowninshield estate was the Maria Emery House at 3 Copley Street (1900: Gay and Proctor, Architects). The design of the house is reminiscent of the single-family homes constructed five years earlier on Osborne Street in the adjacent Graffam-McKay Local Historic District: a two-story late Colonial Revival wood frame clapboard house finished with pilasters at the corners and capped with a slate hip roof and gabled dormers. The house's Copley Street façade is notable for its two-story circular bay window and a large rectangular portico surmounted by a Palladian window.

By 1907, the Emery House was joined by three other homes: the Henry N. Chandler House at 9 Elba Street, the Joseph and Nellie McNeil House at 26 Crowninshield Road and the Isadore Kennedy House at what is now 3-5 and 9 Adams Street (destroyed by fire ca. 1960). 9 Elba Street (1906: George B. Howe, Architect) is a cubical-shaped clapboard clad structure capped with a slate hip roof, and a spacious Tuscan-columned entrance porch that extends across the east side of its first floor.

26 Crowninshield Road (1901: G.W. Desmond, Architect) is one of the most sophisticated and ambitious designs in the neighborhood, conspicuously sited upon a large lot at the corner of Adams Street and Crowninshield Road. The massive 2½ story building is clad in a round natural stone veneer on the first floor and decoratively patterned wood shingles on the second and a half stories. The house is capped with a gambrel roof and natural rounded stone chimneys and a large cross gable on the Crowninshield façade. Shingled bays and oriel and dormer windows enliven the elevations. Carved lion heads accentuate the ends of the two floor plates that support the cross gable façade. A deep front porch spanning both sides of the first floor street façade are supported by natural rounded stone piers, Tuscan wood columns and molded rafter tail trim. A large two-bay garage duplicates the finish materials and details of the main house.

50 Crowninshield Road (1910: Charles Nevin, Architect) is one of the largest and most lavish buildings in the area, constructed in the Craftsman/Spanish Colonial style. The large, rectangular-shaped building has a hip roof clad in clay barrel tiles, an expansive, wrap-around porch with windows on the west and north sides, a variety of bay windows, hip-roofed dormers, and a cornice with wood modillions and paired brackets. The L shaped porch rises from a stucco-clad foundation and piers to segmentally arched openings spanned by a decorative arched wood balustrade. The rear elevation of the house is distinguished by a large, two-story semicircular bay with banded multi-lite windows and exposed rafter tails at the structure's eave. Similar to 26 Crowninshield Road, the house has a substantial two-bay garage that mimics the style, materials and detailing used in the main house.

Medieval Revival styling is found on four houses in the neighborhood that were all built between 1908 and 1913: 28 Copley Street (H.E. Davidson, Architect), 29 Crowninshield Road (Oscar Johnson, Architect), 47 Crowninshield Road (Harry Ramsey, Architect), and 59 Crowninshield Road (Murray and Hutchinson, Architects). These structures are characterized by a looser and more picturesque assembly of forms, including the use of gambrel roofs, swooping gabled porches attached to the side, and half-timber detailing on the street façades.

By 1913, an additional 19 structures had been constructed in the neighborhood, primarily along the northwest portion of Crowninshield Road. These houses were designed in an eclectic mix of styles with a consistently high level of quality detailing and were primarily clad in a stucco finish. 21 Crowninshield Road (1910: Architect/Builder unknown) is typical of the high degree of quality detailing found on a relatively modest-sized building: a cube-shaped structure clad in stucco and capped with a hip roof. A centered entryway is surrounded by a curved arch entry porch and flanked on either side by shallow projected bay windows containing the original window sashes. An eyebrow window is centered above the front door/entryway, the roof eave sits atop exposed roof rafters, and a sunroom is located on the south elevation.

Other houses that closely follow this pattern of design are 25 Crowninshield Road (1912: Harry Ramsay, Architect), 35 Crowninshield Road (1912: Edward Sheenan, Architect), and 39 Crowninshield Road (1908: Oscar Johnson, Architect). Similar examples are also found at the attached houses at 35 Adams Street/16 Crowninshield Road (1913: Oscar Johnson, Architect), 19 Copley Street (1910: Loring and Phipps, Architect), 27 Elba Street (1913: R. L. Davidson, Architect) and 228 Pleasant Street (1900: Joseph Driscoll, Architect).

Another representative pair of stucco-clad homes designed in a Craftsman/Spanish Colonial style are located at 18 and 24 Elba Street (1915: Frederick A. Norcross, Architect). The houses are mirror images of each other, with red clay barrel roof tiles, exposed rafter tails, front porches that extend the length of the front elevation, and shed roof dormers centered on the front and side elevations.

In 1916, an existing wood frame farmhouse was relocated from the south corner of Egmont and Pleasant Streets to 16 Copley Street. Built ca. 1847, by a Mr. Stackpole in the Gothic Revival style, the building was soon sold to Edward Sohler, a noted attorney whose brother-in-law, William Amory, married a sister of Harriet Crowninshield. When the farmhouse was moved to its present location, a side piazza and a laundry room were removed and the building was re-clad

in stucco. However, evidence of the original Gothic Revival massing is evident in the steeply roof pitch and the gable dormer centered over the front entryway.

An interesting transition structure leading to the Colonial Revival style used in later neighborhood buildings can be found at 11 Copley Street (1914: Benjamin Proctor Jr, Architect). A narrow, rectangular building capped with a gabled roof, the street façade possesses a center entrance with a semi-circular entrance portico and flanked on either side by historically correct French doors. Each first-floor French door is capped with a blind relieving arch. The second floor windows are of tripartite design. Three flat-roofed dormers with double casement windows are centered and aligned with the entrance and windows below. Interestingly, the structure is clad in stucco in a manner similar to the houses constructed on Crowninshield Road several years earlier.

One of the earliest and finest examples of the Colonial Revival style exists at 84 Crowninshield Road (1915: R.L. Davidson, Architect). The house is sited prominently at the bend of Crowninshield Road and features a slate roof with bracketed eaves. The front façade is divided into five bays clad in brick. The center entrance is enhanced by a beautifully detailed gabled wood portico supported with Tuscan columns clad in stucco. The first story is framed with brick relieving arches, French doors and semicircular fixed transom lites. A one-story porch projects from the north elevation and a detached brick two-bay garage is covered with a hip roof.

Two more academically detailed examples of the Colonial Revival Style exist at 6 and 12 Elba Street (both 1922: Frank Chouteau Brown, Architect). Displaying spare brick façades laid in Flemish bond coursing, both structures rise to a side gable roof with a symmetrical five-bay façade, a center-entrance portico flanked by tripartite windows and surmounted by another tripartite window, a bracketed wood cornice, and a one-story side porch.

Similar Colonial Revival designs in brick are found at 4 Copley Street (1926: Joseph Keening, Architect) and 182 and 222 Pleasant Street (1935 and 1932 respectively: Architect/Builder unknown).

20 Copley Street (1915: Benjamin Proctor Jr, Architect) is a more modest example of the wood shingle clad Colonial Revival style. This eclectic dwelling has a front entrance on the east side of the street façade which is offset with a bracket door hood, French doors and a hip roof.

Later and more vernacular examples of the late Craftsman style are houses located at 12, 16, 20 and 24 Adams Street (all 1925: S. S. Eisenberg, Architect). Nearly identical in design, each of these modestly sized, cubically massed houses have a center entrance and a pedimented portico flanked by angled bay windows, hip roofs with a hip dormer centered over the front entrance, and banded windows. All four structures were originally clad in wood shingles or clapboard.

The only example of a Dutch Colonial style house in the neighborhood is at 19 Adams Street (1925: Frederick H. Gowing, Architect), which rises 2½ stories to a side-gable roof. Clad in wood clapboard, the street elevation is divided into three bays with an offset bracketed door hood flanked by tripartite windows. There is an attached side porch (now enclosed) with a second-floor sleeping porch on the structure's east side.

By 1927, six lots remained unsold in the neighborhood: 95 Crowninshield, an unnumbered plat adjoining 84 Crowninshield, 75 Crowninshield, an unnumbered plat adjoining 21 Crowninshield, and 182 and 222 Pleasant Street. As previously noted, both plats on Pleasant Street were built upon during the 1930s. A two-story wood frame Garrison house was constructed on 75 Crowninshield in 1967. In 1964, the Headmaster's House for the Dexter School was relocated from its original address at 216 St. Paul Street to 95 Crowninshield Road. 84 Crowninshield eventually incorporated the plat of land lying to its immediate east.

The Crowninshield neighborhood is an intact, well-preserved collection of remarkably harmonious middle- to upper-class, single-family housing, virtually all constructed in the first four decades of the 20th century. In its 115 year-long history, only one structure has been lost to fire, and no structures have been demolished. Alterations to the existing buildings are very few in number and in impact. There are two late 20th century infill buildings and another residence, which was designed to be compatible with the existing architecture on the street.

BOUNDARY DESIGNATION AND JUSTIFICATION

The Crowninshield neighborhood consists of 95 properties whose boundaries conform generally to those of the estate of Harriet Sears Crowninshield. She was the daughter of David Sears II, who was responsible for establishing many of the amenities of North Brookline, including many of its parks and Longwood Mall. David Sears gave each of his children a significant plot of land in North Brookline, the plot of interest having been given to his daughter Harriet who married George C. Crowninshield. The boundaries of her 16-acre estate were already well defined in one of the earliest maps of this neighborhood drafted in 1874.

In particular, while the northern border of the original Crowninshield Estate abutted directly Brighton Avenue (soon to be renamed Commonwealth Avenue); the northern border of the Crowninshield neighborhood runs east-west along the right-of-way between the commercial establishments that front on Commonwealth Avenue and the residential lots that front along the northern side of Adams Street. The eastern edge of the Crowninshield neighborhood runs north-south along the western side of Pleasant Street. The western edge of the Crowninshield neighborhood runs along the house lots fronting along Crowninshield Road. After Crowninshield Road turns eastward toward its southern end, the boundary of the neighborhood runs east-west along Crowninshield Road, excluding those plots that are part of the recently completed St. Aidan's church development.

The Crownshields' estate house, located near the western end of today's Elba Street, was torn down in 1899. By the beginning of the 20th century, the executors of Harriet Crowninshield's estate established the platting of the streets and house lots that exists to this day. The executors of her estate proceeded to sell house lots piecemeal largely in the period 1900-1927.

Two maps are provided on the next page.



1888 Atlas Map



2009 Town of Brookline Assessors Map

CONCLUSION

The proposed Crowninshield Local Historic District is a small, cohesive residential neighborhood. Real estate developments surround it on all sides, threatening its integrity as an historic neighborhood of early-20th century single-family, owner-occupied dwellings. Based on the high degree of architectural and historical significance of this enclave, this area merits consideration as a local historic district. The residents of the Crowninshield neighborhood believe that their neighborhood deserves the recognition and protection of a local historic district.

DRAFT

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MAPS and ATLASES

Bromley, GW & Co. Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass. 1855.

Bromley, GW & Co. Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass. Philadelphia: 1893.

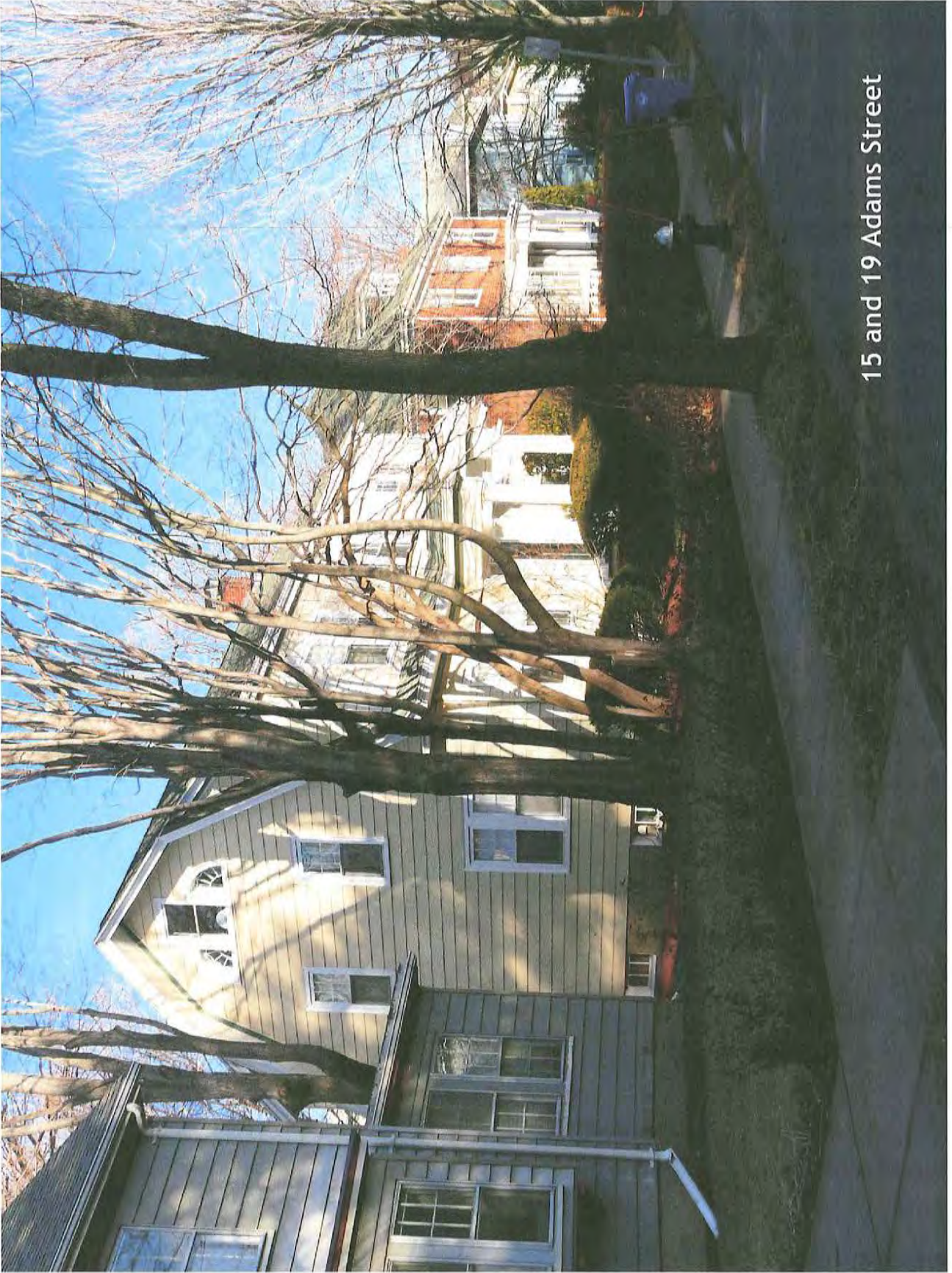
Bromley, GW & Co. Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass. Philadelphia: 1900.

Bromley, GW & Co. Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass. Philadelphia: 1907.

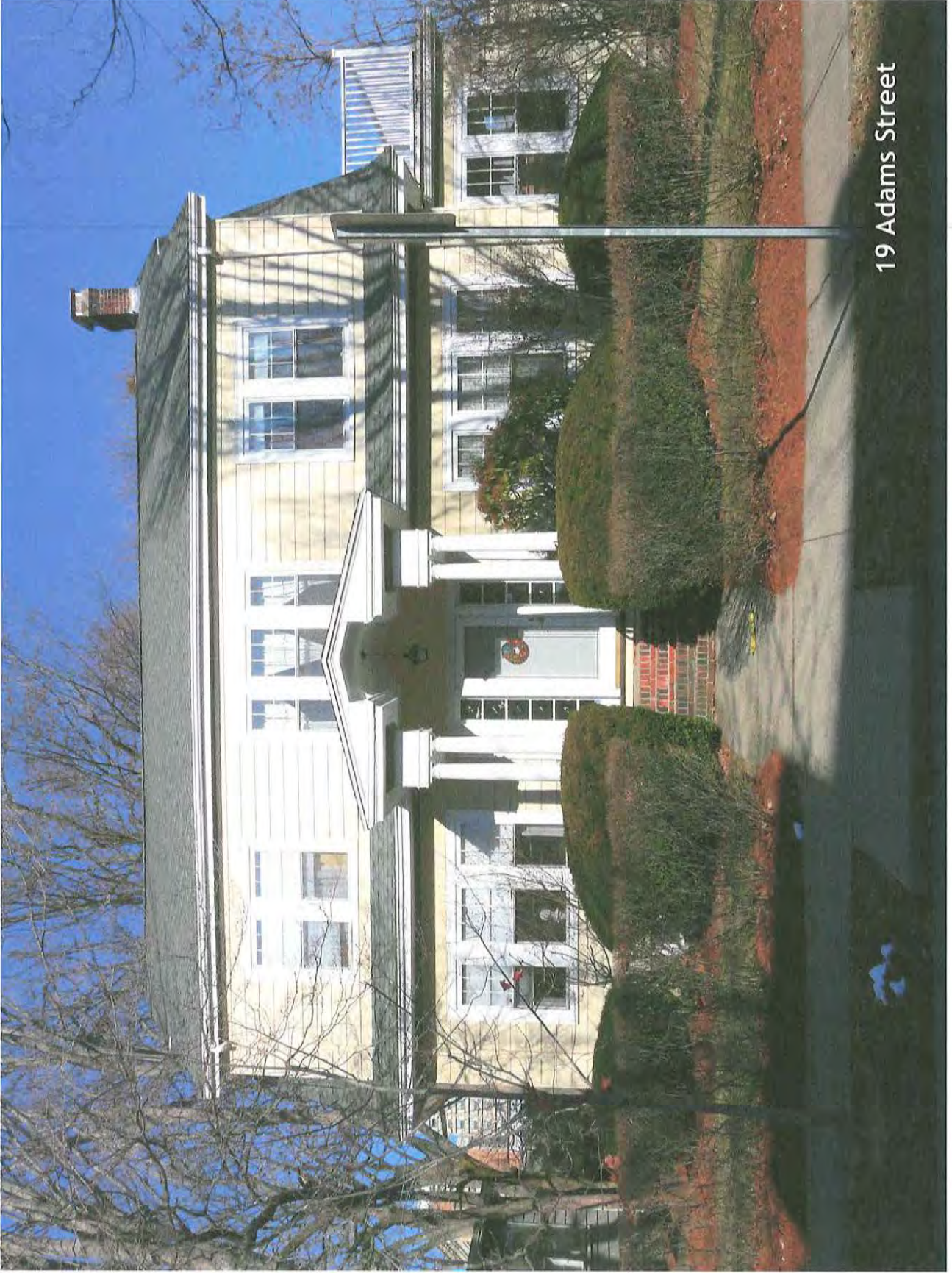
Bromley, GW & Co. Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass. Philadelphia: 1913.

Bromley, GW & Co. Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass. Philadelphia: 1919.

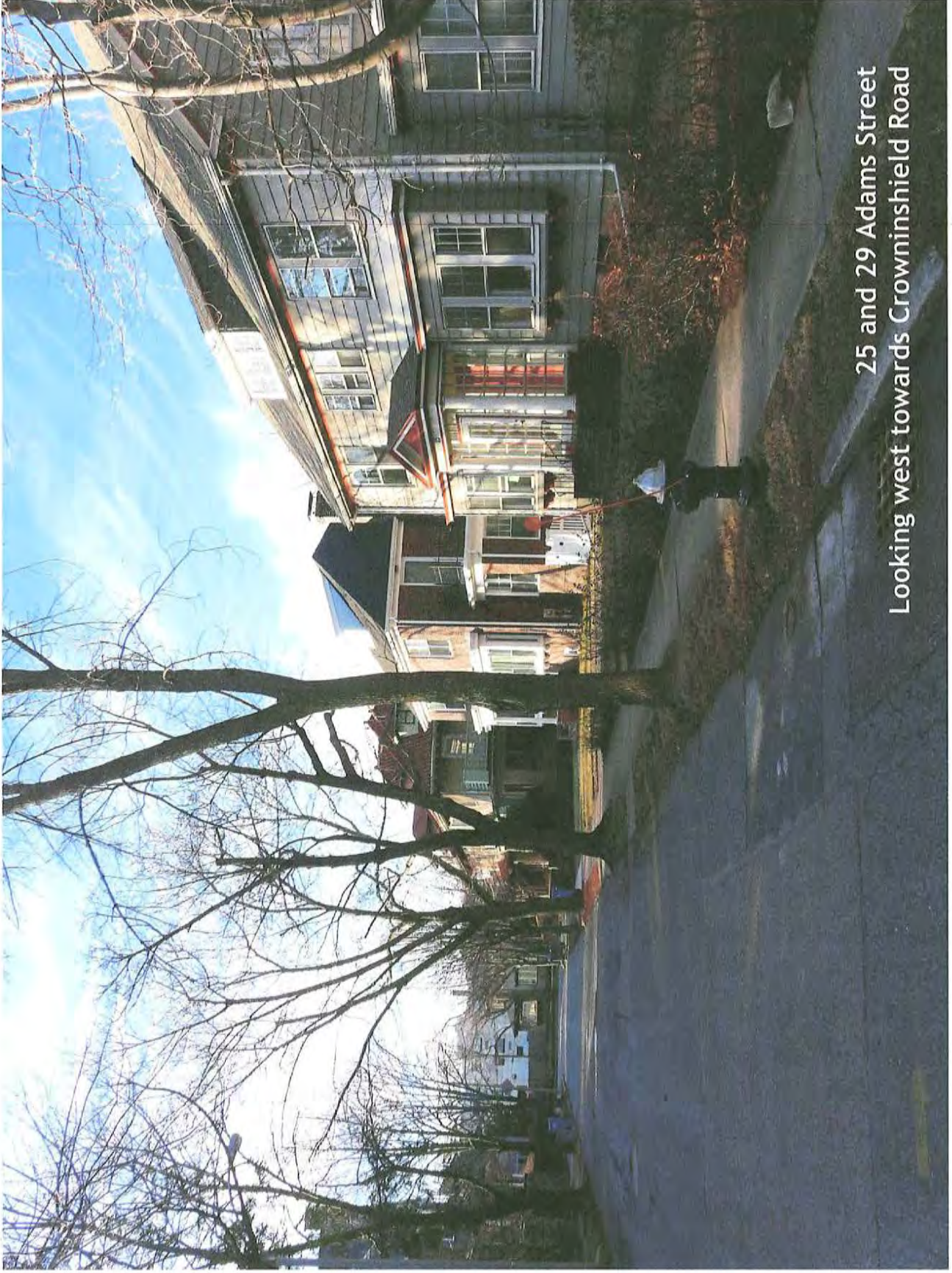
Bromley, GW & Co. Map of the Town of Brookline, Mass. Philadelphia: 1927.



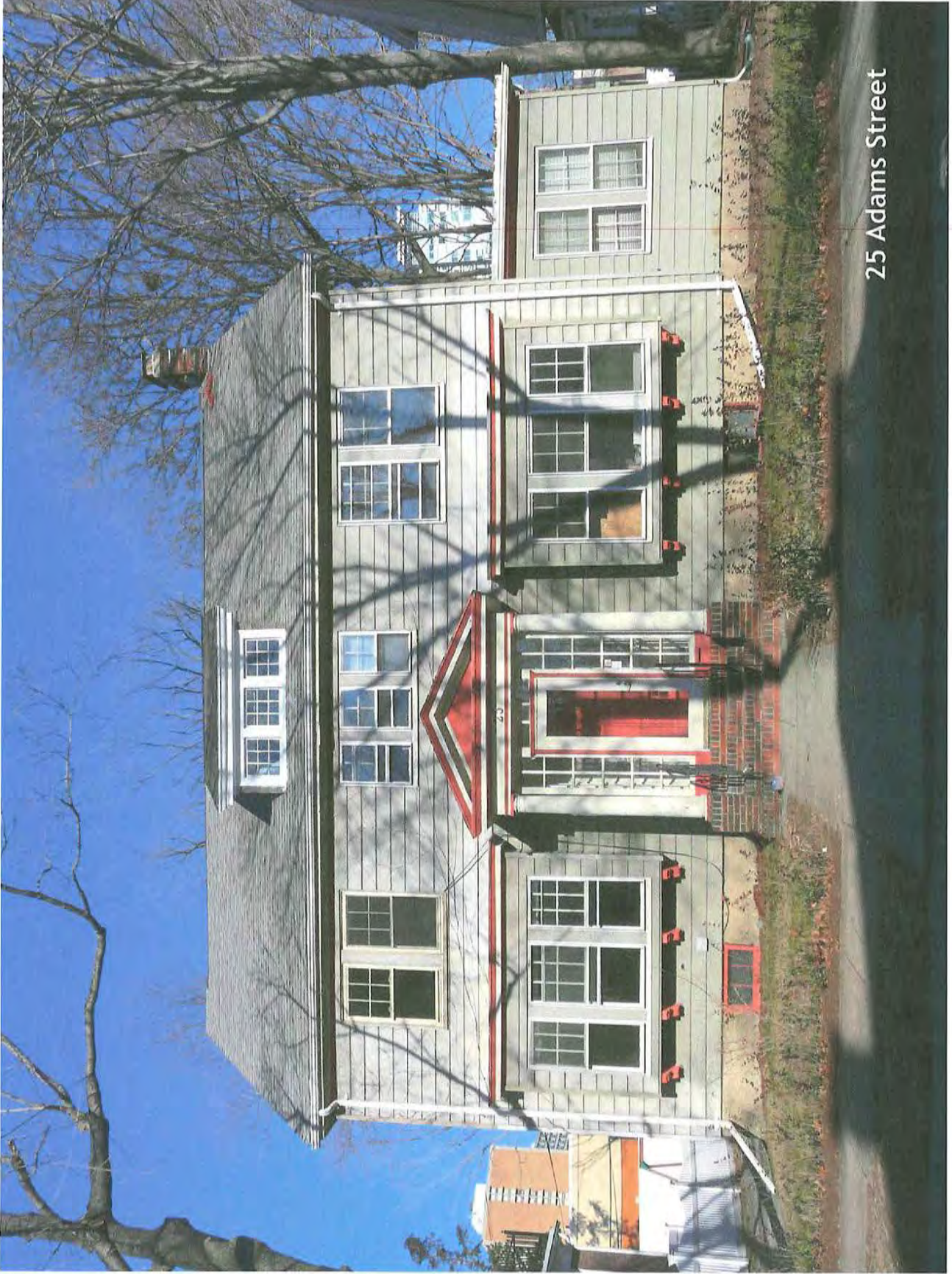
15 and 19 Adams Street



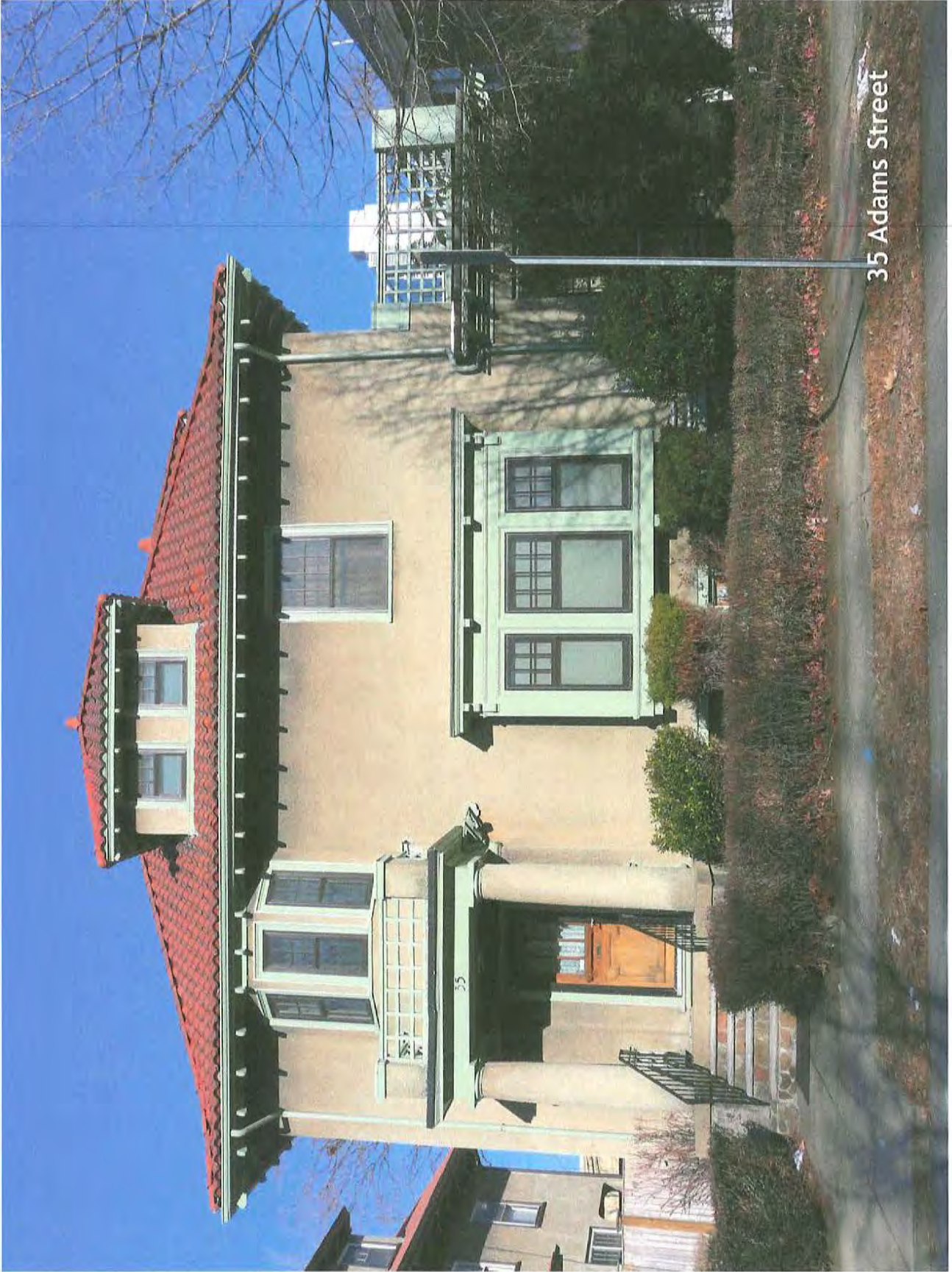
19 Adams Street



25 and 29 Adams Street
Looking west towards Crowninshield Road

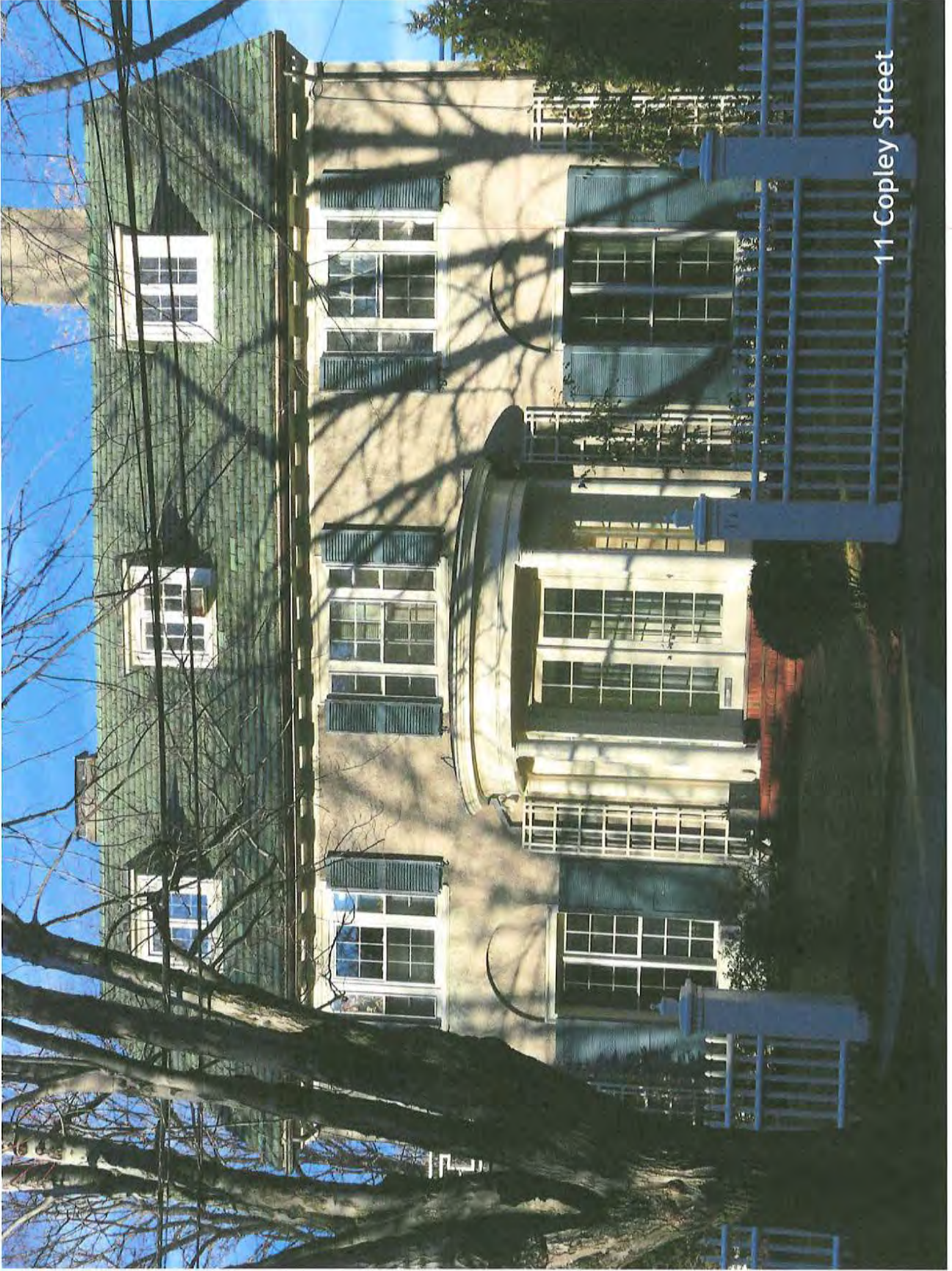


25 Adams Street

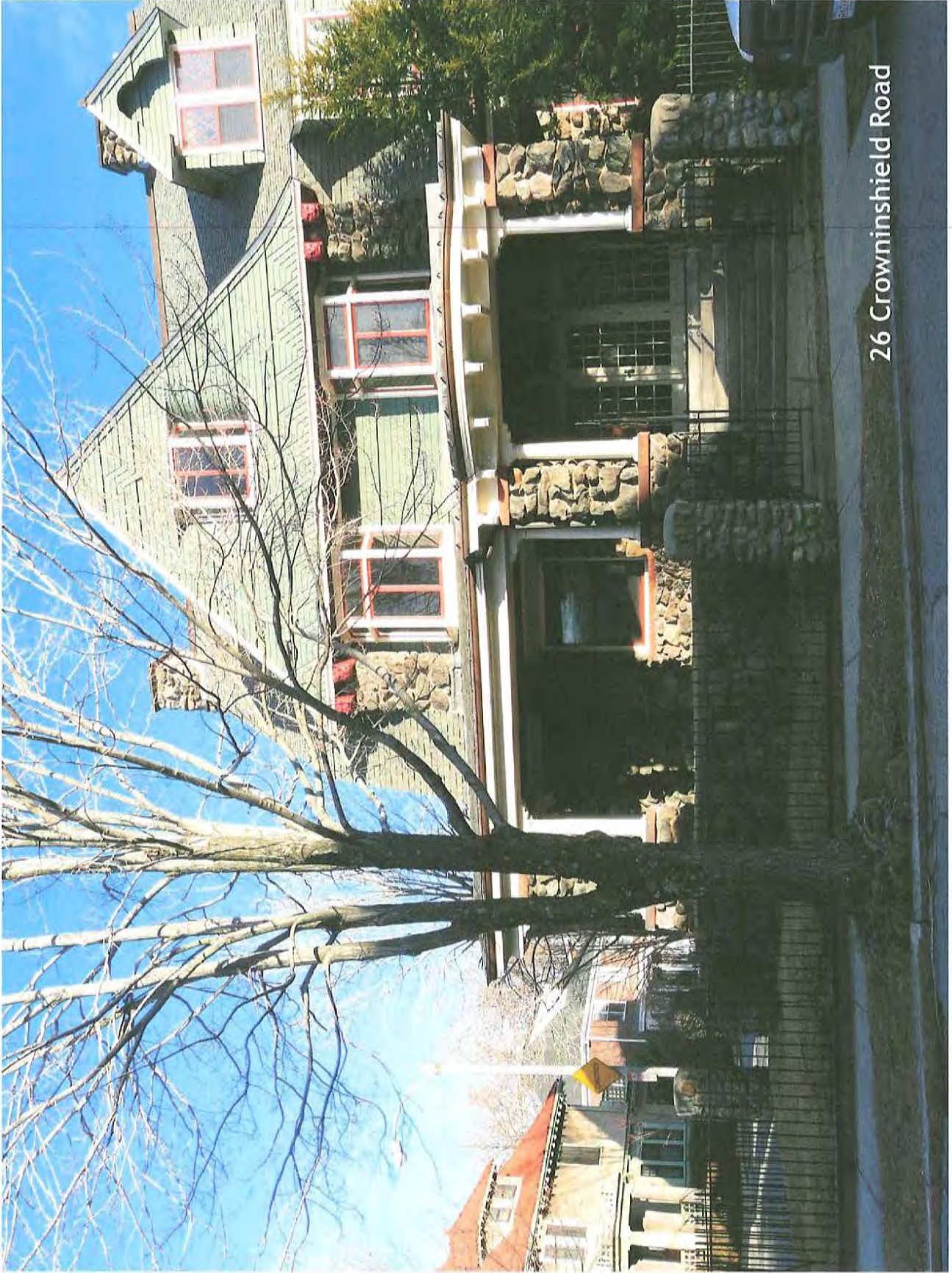




3 Copley Street



11 Copley Street



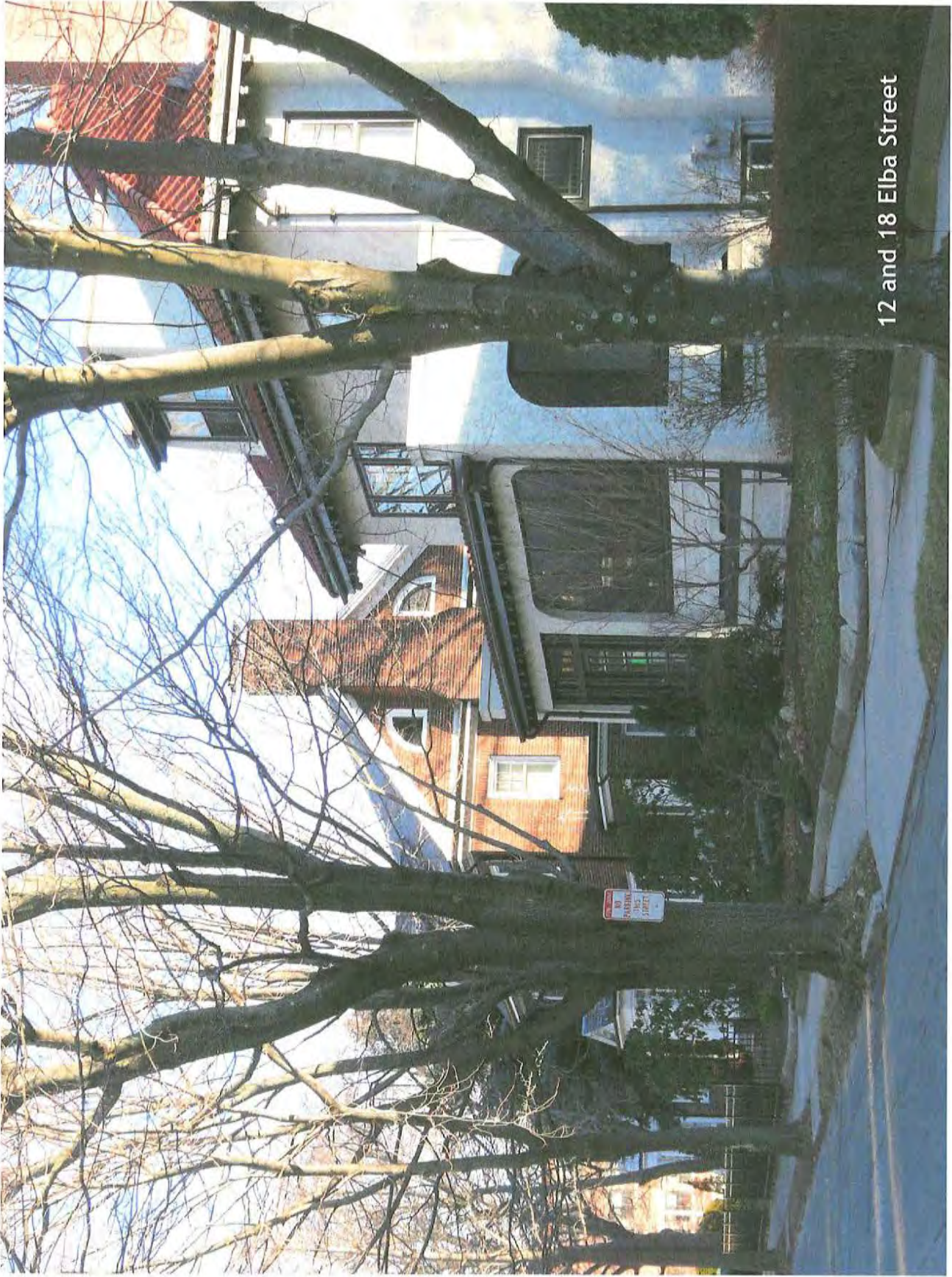
26 Crowninshield Road



47 and 53 Crowninshield Road
View looking south



9 and 21 Elba Street



12 and 18 Elba Street

Crowinshield Property Index

Parcel	Street #	Street	Use	Historic Name	Date of Construction	Style/Form	Architect / Builder	Outbuildings / Secondary Structures	Survey forms
028-02-01	3	Adams	Residential	Edward J. O'Connell house	1984 (Assessors)	No style	Zvi Construction; Brookline	Shed	No
028-02-02	5	Adams	Residential	Edward J. O'Connell house	1984 (Assessors)	No style	Zvi Construction; Brookline	Shed	No
028-03-00	9	Adams	Residential	Robert G. Jones	1907 (Assessors; 1928 on Form B)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	John P. Kelly		Yes
029-13-00	12	Adams	Residential	Sidney Henry Goldinger	1925 (Building Permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	S.S. Eisenberg	Garage	Yes
028-04-00	15	Adams	Residential	Leon E. and Theresa	1925 (Building Permit)	Colonial Revival	Franklin P. Gowing	Garage	Yes
029-12-00	16	Adams	Residential	Benjamin Goldinger	1925 (Building Permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	S.S. Eisenberg	Garage	Yes
028-05-00	19	Adams	Residential	Mary and Michael Redigan	1925	Dutch Colonial/Colonial Revival	Frederick H. Gowing	Garage	Yes
029-11-00	20	Adams	Residential	Benjamin Goldinger	1925 (Building Permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	S.S. Eisenberg	Garage	Yes
029-10-00	24	Adams	Residential	Benjamin Goldinger	1925 (Building Permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	S.S. Eisenberg	Garage	Yes
028-06-00	25	Adams	Residential	W.B. Miller	1925? (Building permit)	Colonial Revival	Frederick H. Gowing	Garage	Yes
029-09-00	28	Adams	Residential	Herbert J. Miles	1912 (Building Permit)	Colonial Revival	E.N. Bayden	Garage	Yes
028-07-00	29	Adams	Residential	Leon E. Granstein - William B. Miller	1925 (Building Permit)	Colonial Revival	Frederick H. Gowing		Yes
028-08-00	35	Adams	Residential	Steven F. Johnson	1913 (Building permit)	Craftsman/Spanish Colonial	Oscar Johnson		Yes
028-09-00	39	Adams	Residential	Stephen F. Johnson	1910 (1913 Atlas + Bldg permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	C.S. Allen		Yes
030-03-00	3	Copley	Residential	Maria S. Emery	1900-01 (Tax list)	Colonial Revival	Gay and Proctor	Partial garage	Yes
031-01-00	4	Copley	Residential	Joseph Keening	1926 (Building permit)	Colonial Revival	Joseph H. Keening	Garage	Yes
031-13-10	10	Copley	Residential	Elizabeth I. O'Neill	1920 (Building permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	C. O'Neill		Yes
030-04-00	11	Copley	Residential	Walter Frank	1914 (building permit)	Colonial Revival	Benjamin Proctor, Jr.	Garage	Yes

Crowninshield Property Index

Parcel	Street #	Street	Use	Historic Name	Date of Construction	Style/Form	Architect / Builder	Outbuildings / Secondary Structures	Survey forms
031-12-00	16	Copley	Residential	Stackpole House	c. 1847 (Form B)	Gothic Revival/Colonial	S Bertram Washburn		Yes
030-05-00	19	Copley	Residential	Nellie A. Hutchins	1910 (Form B)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	Loring and Phipps	Garage	Yes
031-11-00	20	Copley	Residential	Walter W. Hodges	1915 (Form B); back house 1915 (Assessors)	Colonial Revival/Eclectic (back house not visible from street)	Benjamin Proctor, Jr.	Back house	Yes
030-06-00	25	Copley	Residential	F.B. Tyler	1909 (building permit)	Colonial Revival	Davis, McGrath + Kiessling		Yes
031-10-00	28	Copley	Residential	Lucius Barnet	1911 (Building permit)	Medieval Revival/Craftsman	Harry E. Davidson	Garage	Yes
030-07-00	29	Copley	Residential	Ernest J. H. Waters	1909 (Building permit)	Colonial Revival	Davis, McGrath and Kiessling	Garage	Yes
028-10-00	16	Crowninshield	Residential	Stephen Johnson	1910 (Building permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	C.S. Allen and Co.		Yes
027-39-00	21	Crowninshield	Residential	D. Isabella and Louis Ross	1910 (Building permit)	Craftsman/Spanish Colonial	Private plans	Garage 1932 McCarthy; Fred Santini architect, Craftsman style	Yes
027-40-00	25	Crowninshield	Residential	Stephen F. Johnson	1912 (Building permit)	Craftsman	Harry Morton Ramsay	Garage 1933 Katherine Barredo, Salvador Cuetara; P. Rich architect	Yes
029-08-00	26	Crowninshield	Residential	Nellie (Mrs. Joseph) McNeil	1901 (building permit)	Shingle Style	G. W. Desmond	Garage	Yes
027-41-00	29	Crowninshield	Residential	William Potter	1908 (building permit)	Medieval Revival	Oscar Johnson	Garage 1925 Harold Smith; James Viviente architect, English Revival style	Yes
027-42-00	35	Crowninshield	Residential	Oscar Ceppi	1912 (Bkl Tax list 1911-12)	Craftsman/Spanish Colonial	T. Edward Sheehan	Garage 1920 Joseph F. Curran and George P. Champlin; Henry E. McClay, Smith and White architects	Yes
029-07-00	38	Crowninshield	Residential	Mario Ceppi	1913 (Bkl Building Dept file)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	T. Edward Sheehan	Garage	Yes
027-43-00	39	Crowninshield	Residential	Oscar Johnson	1908 (building Department)	Craftsman	Oscar Johnson	Garage see 35 Crowninshield	Yes
027-44-00	43	Crowninshield	Residential	Louise Horle	1913 (building permit)	Craftsman	Harland A. Perkins	Garage Francis A. Horie; Oscar Johnson architect	Yes

Crowninshield Property Index

Parcel	Street #	Street	Use	Historic Name	Date of Construction	Style/Form	Architect / Builder	Outbuildings / Secondary Structures	Survey forms
027-45-00	47	Crowninshield	Residential	Oscar Johnson	1912-13 (Building permit)	Medieval Revival	Harry Ramsay		Yes
030-08-00	50	Crowninshield	Residential	Arthur Bonney	1910 (Building permit)	Arts and Crafts	Charles K.B. Nevin	Garage	Yes
027-46-00	53	Crowninshield	Residential	Miss M.E. Davis	1911 (Building permit)	Craftsman renovation	Hooper-Waters	Garage 1919 Henry M. Fenton; Desmond and Lord architects (demolished)	Yes
027-47-00	59	Crowninshield	Residential	I.J. Newkirk	1911 (Tax list-bldg permit)	Medieval Revival/eclectic	Murray and Hutchinson	Garage, 1912 Clyde Newkirk; Clyde Newkirk architect	Yes
027-48-00	61	Crowninshield	Residential	Frederick and Annie M. Waite	1909 (Building permit)	Craftsman/Shingle	Thomas H. James, Hill and James	Garage 1927; Anna H. Waite; Silverman, Brown & Hienen, Jacob Silverstein architects	Yes
027-49-00	67	Crowninshield	Residential	Ada and Charles Durgan	1914 (Building permit)	Craftsman	Oscar Johnson	Garage 1914 Ada Durgan; Oscar Johnson architect, Craftsman style	Yes
027-50-00	71	Crowninshield	Residential	Albert Watts	1914 (Building permit)	Craftsman	Roscoe L. Davidson	Garage 1919 Maude H. Rockwell; J.A. Singeralle, C. Howard Walker architects	Yes
027-51-00	75	Crowninshield	Residential		1967 (assessors)	No style		Garage	Yes
031-09-00	78	Crowninshield	Residential	James Thomas	1911 (Building permit)	Colonial Revival	Benjamin Proctor Jr.		Yes
027-52-00	81	Crowninshield	Residential	E. I. O'Neill	1920 (Bkl Bldg Comm. Files)	Craftsman	H. Chisholm	Garage 1926 James Doherty; James Murray architect	Yes
031-08-00	84	Crowninshield	Residential	R.L. Davidson	1915 (Building permit)	Colonial Revival	R.L. Davidson	Garage	Yes
027-53-00	87	Crowninshield	Residential	William Hirsch	1921 (Building permit)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	Jas. T. Ball	Garage 1921 William Hirsch; Joseph T. Ball, Morris Bronstein architects; Colonial Revival, Craftsman style	Yes
027-54-00	91	Crowninshield	Residential	Dr. Charles J. Kickham	1926 (Bkl Bldg Dept files)	Colonial Revival	Harold R. Duffie	Garage 1927 Mary J. Kickham; John E. Kickham architect	Yes

Crowinshield Property Index

Parcel	Street #	Street	Use	Historic Name	Date of Construction	Style/Form	Architect / Builder	Outbuildings / Secondary Structures	Survey forms
027-55-00	95	Crowninshield	Residential	Robert J. Cummings	1926 (Bkl Bldg Dpt files; tax list)	Colonial Revival/Cape	Blackall and Elwell		Yes
031-06-00	98	Crowninshield	Residential	Raymond Adams	1920 (Building permit)	Colonial Revival	George Wood	Garage	Yes
031-05-00	102	Crowninshield	Residential	John F. Gately, esq.	1925 (Bkl Bldg Dpt Files)	Craftsman	Joseph Keening	Garage	Yes
031-04-00	108	Crowninshield	Residential	Annie Gately	1925 (Bldg permit)	Colonial Revival; Georgian	Oscar S. Peterson		Yes
029-03-00	5	Elba	Residential	Margaret Hunter	1906 (Bldg permit)	Colonial Revival	S.J. Rantin	Garage	Yes
030-01-00	6	Elba	Residential	Jos. L. Margaret E. McNamara	1922 (Bldg permit)	Colonial Revival	Frank Chouteau Brown	Garage	Yes
029-04-00	9	Elba	Residential	Henry N. Chandler	1906 (1907 atlas+ Bldg permit)	Craftsman	Geo. B. Howe	Garage	Yes
030-11-00	12	Elba	Residential	Michael T. Coleman	1922 (bldg permit)	Colonial Revival	Frank Chouteau Brown	Garage	Yes
030-10-00	18	Elba	Residential	Arthur H. Sicotte	1915 (Bldg permit)	Craftsman; Spanish Colonial	Frederick A. Norcross	Garage	Yes
029-05-00	21	Elba	Residential	Augustus DeCort	1919 (Directory/bldg permit)	Colonial Revival	Thos. James	Garage	Yes
030-09-00	24	Elba	Residential	Arthur H. Sicotte	1915 (Bldg permit)	Craftsman; Spanish Colonial	Frederick A. Norcross	Garage	Yes
029-06-00	27	Elba	Residential	Robert C. Martin	1913 (Bldg permit)	Craftsman	Roscoe L. Davidson	Garage	Yes
031-03-00	182	Pleasant	Residential	Fred A. Corbet	1935 (Assessors)	Colonial Revival	Joseph H. Keening	Garage	Yes
031-02-00	186	Pleasant	Residential	Joseph H. Keening	1924 (Assessors)	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	Oscar S. Peterson	Garage	Yes
030-02-00	204	Pleasant	Residential	George Gitter	1973 (Assessors)	No style	James L. Pine	Garage attached to house	Yes
029-02-00	222	Pleasant	Residential	W.B. Miller	1932 (Assessors)	Colonial Revival	James F. Marley	Garage	Yes
029-01-00	228	Pleasant	Residential	Joseph P. Kenney	1900 (Assessors)	Craftsman	Joseph J. Driscoll		Yes

DRAFT - Crowninshield Local Historic District

Town of Brookline
Massachusetts

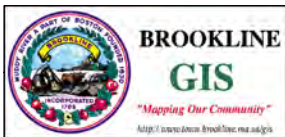
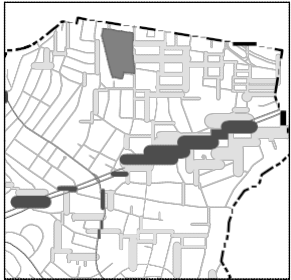


- Crowninshield LHD
- Building Footprints
- Property Lines
- Street Edges
- Town Boundary

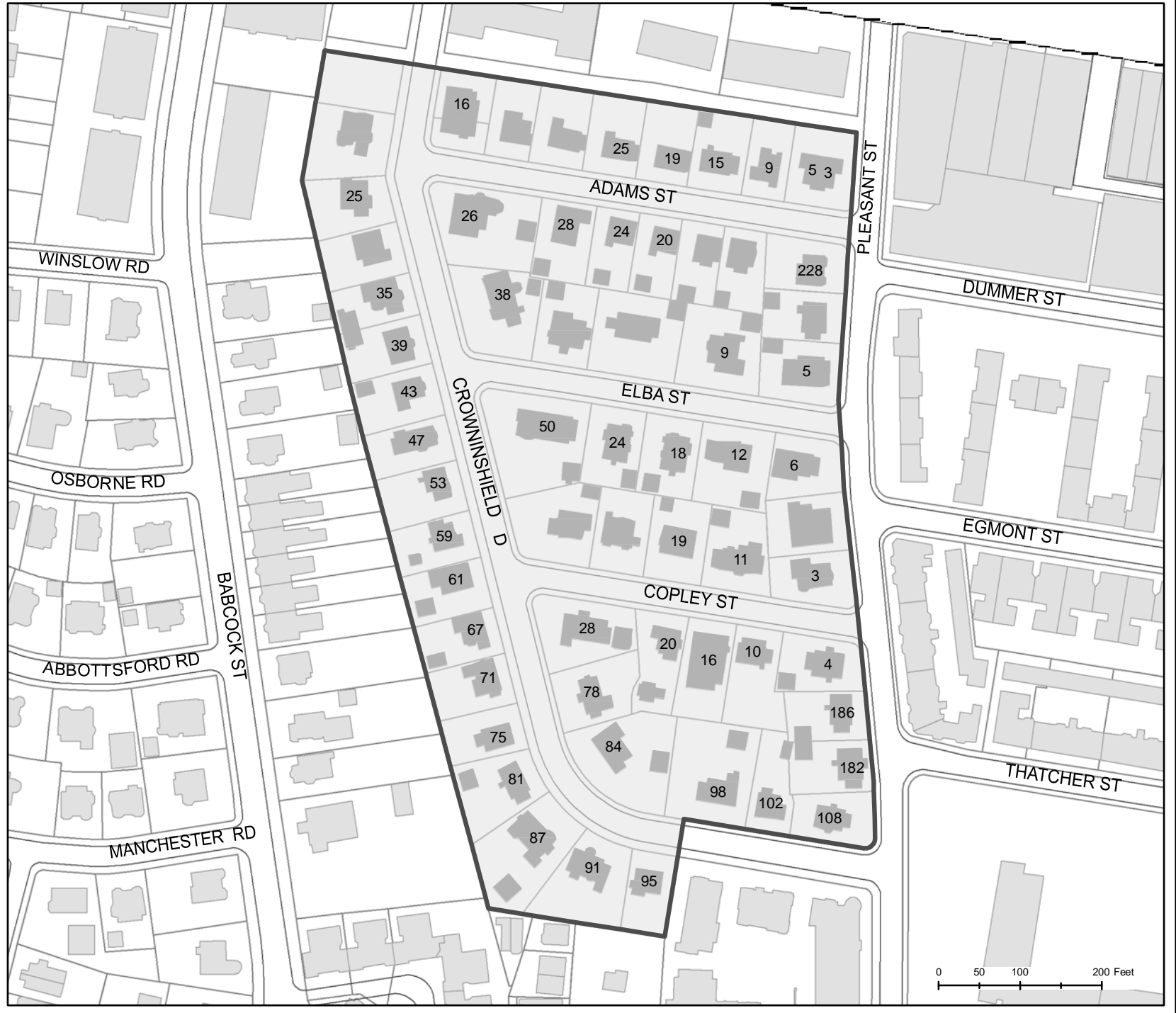
Data Sources

The information shown on this map is from the Brookline Geographic Information System (GIS) database

Locus Map



Map created by Brookline GIS on 2/3/2015



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